

F

526

.H33

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF MY BOYHOOD



Class _____

Book _____

With the compliment
of the elder son of
the Author -

A. C. Harris



BRANSON L. HARRIS

AGE 90

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF MY BOYHOOD

BRANSON L. HARRIS



ISSUED ON HIS
NINETY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

4-21-1908

19 - 2

F526
H22

THE HOLLOWBECK PRESS, INDIANAPOLIS

0102 B3
Aug 13 42

SOME RECOLLECTIONS OF MY BOYHOOD DAYS

At the request of my sons I here set down some recollections of my boyhood days. Although I am now ninety years of age I can remember many things in the long ago as clearly as ever. Of course, many things have passed from my mind.

I

I begin by telling something of our family:

I here give, as my Uncle Benjamin Harris gave to me, the nationality of my great-grandfather. His name was Obadiah Harris. He came from Wales. He was a very large man and weighed three hundred and twenty pounds. He came to the state of North Carolina in an early day and settled in Guilford county, somewhere near Bird's hatter shop and Dobson's cross-roads. He

RECOLLECTIONS

was one of the charter members that built the New Garden meeting house. He was a Quaker preacher and lived there many years. My grandfather, Benjamin Harris, was born in Guilford county and lived there until his family was about grown. He moved to the territory of Indiana in 1807, and settled about six miles north of Richmond and four miles southeast from Fountain City. Soon after my grandfather came to this state my great-grandfather moved here from North Carolina; also, his younger son, who was a Quaker preacher, and settled near Fountain City, Wayne county, and there built a Quaker meeting house and gave it the name New Garden.

II

John Lewis, my mother's father, came from Randolph county, in the state of North Carolina, to the territory of Indiana in the year 1810 and settled in Wayne county, Green township, in the valley of Greens Fork, a little over a half mile south of Williamsburg. He and his family were the first

RECOLLECTIONS

settlers in Green township. I have heard him say that he knew of no white person then living either north or west of him. He and his descendants have lived on the same farm for nearly one hundred years. The nearest neighbor he had, except the Indians, was about six miles from where he had settled. His name was James Martindale, who lived six miles to the southwest. He came in 1809 and bought a good tract of land where the town of Greens Fork is. Forty-one years ago I bought a part of this land and I am yet living on it, and I expect to live here the rest of my life.

III

I was born in Wayne county, Indiana, on April 21, 1817. My father, whose name was James, came from North Carolina with his father Benjamin Harris and a large family to the territory of Indiana in the year 1807. My father's age at that time was about sixteen. My father, who married Naomi Lewis, first settled three miles farther west on Morgan's creek. In about two or three years he sold out and entered one hundred and sixty

RECOLLECTIONS

acres of land one mile southeast of Williamsburg on the road leading to Richmond. On this land he put up a log cabin and moved into it. After living there eight or nine years father sold his farm and bought another, one mile and a half southwest of Williamsburg on Greens Fork. I was nine years old when he moved here. Father lived on the farm until his death.

IV

I now wish to go back to my earliest recollection and note down some things that I saw and heard. The first thing I will speak of is when I was very young, not more than four years old. I was out in the field with father where he was hoeing corn. As I recollect, it was a cloudy evening. All at once the wolves began to howl. I said, "Daddy, I want to go out in the woods where they are and see them." He said, "No, you can't go! They would kill you and eat you up." When he told me they would kill me and eat me up, this satisfied my curiosity. In those days some persons built wolf traps about six feet

RECOLLECTIONS

square out of small logs or poles. When they got the pen about five or six feet high, it was drawn in like building a stick and clay chimney, leaving a hole at the top, then baited inside with fresh meat. The wolf jumps in at the top. When in, it can't jump out.

Father very often would take his gun and go out hunting early in the morning while the frost was on, and often before nine o'clock he would come in with a deer on his back; or, if he had killed one that was too heavy to carry, he would take a horse and sled and haul it home, then dress and cut it up, and we would have some fresh venison. And often he would send me with pieces of venison to some of our nearest neighbors. Sometimes when he would go hunting he would bring in a turkey or a pheasant or two. At that time there was plenty of wild game. In the winter or early in the spring I have often seen deer in our wheat field eating the green wheat. The bear was not to be seen very often; occasionally some neighbor would kill one.

RECOLLECTIONS

V

Father and mother's early home was a plain hewed log cabin one story high, clapboard roof, a door on each side of the house, round poles for joists, one glass window, a plank floor pegged down, loose plank floor overhead, stick and clay chimney, with a pole run across up above the jambs, high enough so it wouldn't catch fire, to hang cooking vessels and kettles on. Mother's cooking vessels were, a pot, an oven, a skillet, an iron teakettle and a johnnycake board. She cooked over and before the fire. The oven and skillet had iron lids. She baked corn pone and loaf in the oven, biscuit and pies in the skillet. She shoveled the fire coals out on the hearth, set the cooking vessels on the coals, put in dough, put on the lid and fire on the lid and baked. She hung the vessels over the fire to boil meat, potatoes, cabbage, and other things. Our food was simple, but wholesome. We drank milk, and spicebrush and sassafras tea. (I have seen tea made of red sycamore chips.) It was a long while before coffee and tea came into use. Every one

RECOLLECTIONS

made his own sugar and molasses in the spring.

VI

The first mill that I recollect of was what was called a "tread-wheel mill." I can tell but very little how it was built. This much I recollect; the machinery was propelled by the weight and the moving forward of the horses. There was a round platform placed a little above ground, some fifty to eighty feet in circumference. The horses were placed upon the platform at a certain place, tied by the halter. When the horses step forward, that sets the platform to moving in its circle. The machinery that does the grinding is attached to that. They only ground corn. I have no recollection of ever seeing but one. The mill was three miles from where father lived, on the road we went when going to see Grandfather Harris. This corn-cracker was on Nolen's Fork, three miles east of where we lived.

The first lumber I ever saw was whipsawed, and this was not very common. The way they arranged to do the sawing was as

RECOLLECTIONS

follows: The first thing to do was to build a scaffold by setting four forks in the ground some six feet apart one way, and twelve or fourteen the other way. The forks would have to stand above ground some feet and then two skids were laid across for the log to rest on. The logs that I saw them sawing were five or six feet above ground. The log was hewed square, and when it was put upon the scaffold it required two men at least to do the sawing. One man stands upon the log, the other man stands directly beneath. Then they pulled and pushed the saw up and down. This whipsaw mill was built near-by the tread-wheel mill.

As far back as I can recollect it was quite a task to go to mill to get the wheat and corn ground. There were no mills near that made good flour. There were but few mills in the country. These few were run by water. There were times in the year when the water was very low and they could do but little grinding in a day. They would have to stop grinding until they could gather a head of water. Then they could start up again and grind a short time. A great many persons

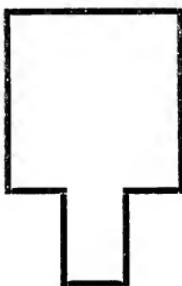
RECOLLECTIONS

would hitch to their wagons and take a load of grain to mill for themselves and neighbors, and very frequently there would be so many loads in ahead of them they would have to wait a day or more for their turn to get their grain ground. The distance that some families would have to go to get to mills that had a bolting-cloth and run by water power was from ten to thirty miles. Sometimes it would take two days to go to mill. The two mills that I knew of were Newman's at Richmond, and Goodlander's on Greens Fork, from fifteen to twenty-five miles down the creek. I also knew of one mill that was run by water in the north part of Wayne county that ground wheat and corn. Grinding wheat was very tedious and tiresome. The bolting frame had to be turned by hand with a crank like a grind-stone or a coffee mill. When I got large enough to go to mill father would put a bushel and a half in a sack and throw it across a horse's back. Then I would get on the sack and ride to the mill. I would stand on a box to be high enough to reach the crank so I could turn the bolting cloth.

RECOLLECTIONS

VII

The first school I ever went to was in a small log cabin, clapboard roof, stick and clay chimney. The cabin was on my grandfather's land, not far from where Williamsburg is now. The first book I had to take to school was the "A B C," as we called them, and "a, b, ab's" printed on a piece of paper about three or four inches wide and pasted on a board with a handle made in this shape:



We had no intermission. The schoolmaster kept books from eight o'clock in the morning till half past eleven; and from one o'clock until four or five o'clock in the evening. The children were seated upon slab benches. I had to go about one mile to school through the woods.

RECOLLECTIONS

The first three or four schoolhouses that I attended were built of small logs with clap-board roof. The top log at each end of the house was about four feet longer than the other end logs in order to make an eave to the house. They would get a nice little poplar tree or gray ash that would split straight and split it in two, take one-half and put on one side of the house and the other half on the other side of the house on the ends of those logs that projected from the corners of the house and edge them up to keep the clapboards from sliding off, then they would put on a big pole lengthwise on the house. These poles were called ribs. Then put on another end log at each end of the house just long enough to hold the ribs, then slope the ends off so the boards could be put on; and so continue till they got the house ribbed, then the house is ready for roofing. The first course of boards were laid on the top log of the house and the next rib; then they would take a pole, not quite as large as they laid the roof on, and lay on the boards to hold them from sliding or blowing off. They also would have to take two or three short pieces

RECOLLECTIONS

of split timber (called knees) and lay up and down on the boards between the top poles to keep them from sliding or rolling off. They were called weight poles. And so continue laying course after course until the house was completely roofed. They then would chunk and daub the house with clay or mud, build a stick and clay chimney, cut out a log, most commonly on the north side of the house, put little sticks up and down between the logs a few inches apart and paste paper on the sticks, then grease the paper. This was to give light. On the south side was the door. On the right side as you went in was a glass window where the teacher sat with chair and table. There was a large fireplace inside. The floor was made of puncheons. We had slab benches to sit on with no backs to them. In cold weather when our feet got cold we would ask the master to let us go to the fire to warm them.

If any of the scholars misbehaved he would call us up to his seat, question us, and whip us, if he thought we deserved it. If he thought whipping was too severe punishment he would have us sit on the dunce block,

RECOLLECTIONS

or weave "sole leather," and let the scholars laugh at us while we shot the shuttle through under our knees from side to side, as we would raise our bodies by putting our hands on the floor and raising ourselves a little. Then we had to bump, bump, then shoot the shuttle back and bump, bump again until he said, "That will do." All teachers were not guilty of punishing in that way, but I saw it in more than one school. I went to one school where the teacher would punish scholars with a ferrule he had to rule our copybooks. He would take hold of the fingers and straighten out the hand and strike the boy across the palm of the hand, which was a severe punishment. All the masters that I went to until I was fourteen or fifteen years old kept a pretty long switch in the schoolhouse. In some of the schools that I went to the scholars studied out loud. The books used when I went to school were a Primer, Webster's Spelling-Book, the Introduction, or English Reader, and an American Reader, and Adams' Geography. Our writing table was on one side of the house where the paper window was. They bored holes in the logs

RECOLLECTIONS

just below the window, put in wooden pins and placed a broad plank on the pins for a writing desk. Some of the schoolmasters after books was called would let the scholars study their lessons awhile. Then when all had said their lessons, he would say to those who were learning to write: "Come and get your copybooks and go and write." Not more than three lines at a time did he allow them to write. And when they were seated at the writing table he would come and show them how to hold the pen and to shape and make letters, and so forth. We said four lessons every day; two in the forenoon and two in the afternoon. He would say: "Lay down your books and get the spelling lesson." After we had studied the lesson a few minutes he would say: "Put away your books and get ready to spell." We would form in line and he would give out the lesson to us word by word, and we tried to see who could get ahead. When one missed spelling a word the one below spelled the word. He went above him, or as many as missed spelling the word given out by the master. If the word was given out to the one who was at

RECOLLECTIONS

head and was misspelled by every one in the class on down to the foot of the class, and he who stood foot spelled the word right, he, by spelling the word, turned them all down and went up head at once.

We went to the springs for water. At some springs we would dip the water up with a gourd and fill the wooden bucket to carry to the school-house for the scholars to drink. We sometimes, on Christmas, turned out the master to make him treat us to two bushels of apples. If he refused we would carry him to the branch to duck him; but just before we would get to the branch he would say: "Let me down, boys, I will treat." And then he would send for apples, and we would have a holiday feast. In later times the teacher would sometimes treat to licorice and candy.

Spelling-schools in time were common through the country in different neighborhoods. The schools at the different districts would set a time to have a spelling-school, then give out word and invite other schools. We didn't try to see which school could beat spelling. Either two boys or two girls as

RECOLLECTIONS

captains would choose up, taking choice about. When all were chosen we then would spell to see which side would beat. The school teacher would keep order and give out for the scholars to spell. Whenever a scholar missed spelling a word he sat down. When the teacher commenced giving out, the side that got the first choice would be given the first word to spell; then next to the other side, and so on alternately from side to side; and as one missed spelling a word he sat down until all on both sides were seated.

Some of the young people almost knew by heart the spelling-books or small dictionary commonly used. Frequently we had spelling-schools on Sunday afternoons.

In the early time, when I was a boy, there were but few singing-schools. I recollect of one man teaching singing-school, and I wanted to go but my father objected. He said it was a place for the rowdies to gather and cut up. Father still had Quaker blood flowing in his veins, although he married out of that church. I have heard my grandmother Harris object bitterly to congrega-

RECOLLECTIONS

tional singing in church. My younger brothers took the matter in their own hands and went to singing-school and became good singers. I often regret that I didn't do as my two brothers did. I might have been much more useful in the church than I am.

VIII

At the time father lived on the road southeast of Williamsburg it was known by the name of Johnson's Mill. Many a time when out along the road I have been asked, "How far is it to Johnson's Mill?" by men who were traveling. At that time there were a great many men going west and north to enter land to make homes for themselves and their children. At that day the only way of traveling was to go afoot or on horseback, more especially when exploring a new country. Men who were out looking for land to enter for homes often called at father's to stay over night. Most generally there would be two men together. When they got their horses put away they would come carrying their saddle-bags to the house and

RECOLLECTIONS

throw them under the bed where they were to sleep. That was the only lock and key there was about the house. They carried their silver in their saddle-bags.

IX

The high land seemed to grow all kinds of timber more than the bottom lands along the water courses. We had a great variety, such as yellow poplar, white oak, bur-oak, pin-oak, black oak, gray and blue ash, hickory, black and white walnut, maple, beech, and red oak, wild cherry, sugar-tree, sycamore, buckeye, black gum, and a great variety of undergrowth of various kinds. On the bottom lands the principal growth was sycamore, black walnut, white or hickory elm, some shell-bark hickory, blue ash, some white and bur-oak, and buckeye, and sugar-tree. The woods as a general thing were very thick set with underbrush, such as spicewood, ironwood and hazel bush and other kinds. Now, to keep from getting lost, especially the women and children, the men would have to cut and blaze out a trail,

RECOLLECTIONS

sometimes called a path, through the woods to and from each one of the neighbor's houses as they would go back and forth to borrow from and visit each other. Roads for several years after they were cut out through the woods were in many places very bad in crossing branches, and black, flat, wet land soon became miry so they would have to build corduroys. We would cut poles and logs and split timber and lay the same across the road in many places wherever the ground was low and wet, and sometimes throw some dirt on the logs so it wouldn't be quite so rough to pass over. Sometimes the bridge would be ten or fifteen rods long in marshy ground. It would be some time after a road was opened before the roots and stumps would rot out so we could plow and grade the road. It took a great deal of work to make and keep roads so they could be traveled. It was a long time before the people learned to make turnpikes.

RECOLLECTIONS

X

My first visit to Indianapolis was made when I was about twelve years old. My father and mother and my younger brother Winston and myself went out to Indianapolis to visit my Uncle Obadiah Harris, my father's brother, who lived two miles west of that town. We went in a two-horse wagon. The road had recently been chopped and grubbed out. West of Knightstown most of the road was very bad. There were a good many places that had become miry. People who were going west had to cut out byroads sometimes for half a mile or more to get around those bad mud holes. So one day Winston and I concluded we would take it afoot along the main road, as the wagon was to go the by-road. We went on and kept looking for them until we became alarmed and scared. Winston commenced crying. We turned back. They became alarmed and hallooed for us, but we failed to hear them. Father left mother with the team and came running back to see what had become of us. We met him where he left the road and took

RECOLLECTIONS

the byway. We stayed with the wagon from that on. We camped out one night on the bank of a creek, fed the horses and ate our supper out in the lonely, thick forest, and slept in the wagon during the night. In the morning, as soon as mother could get breakfast, we ate and started on. The big black horseflies were so bad father had to spread quilts over the horses' backs to keep them off. It looked like they would almost eat the horses up. We stopped and fed and ate dinner somewhere between Greenfield and Indianapolis, I can't now tell just where. I recollect very well what I thought. I thought it a very wet, flat country. The land along there don't look to me like it did then. The capital of the state was no great city at that time. The better part of the town was along Washington street, not far this side of the river. There was no bridge at Indianapolis, and we drove north and crossed Fall creek somewhere above the mouth and went up White river to where there was a ford and crossed over and got on the National road again. It was but a short distance to

RECOLLECTIONS

Uncle Obadiah's after we got on the National road.

My father and his brother had married two sisters, daughters of John Lewis, and the families were always very much attached to each other.

When we drove up in front of Uncle Obadiah's house on the south side of the National road, my mother leaped from the wagon into her sister's arms and all cried with joy. This scene I will never forget.

XI

When father commenced clearing the farm southeast of Williamsburg he, like the rest of his neighbors, had no way to haul anything. People were too poor to own a wagon. They had to make sleds before they could do any hauling of any kind, such as hauling rails to build fences or getting wood for fires in the house.

They made and used what they called rail sleds some ten feet long. They would make boxes something like a wagon bed and put on the sled to gather their corn in, and they

RECOLLECTIONS

would take hickory withes and some straight poles and bind the poles and sled together with the withes in some certain way, so they could load on their hay and wheat and haul it to the barn or stack. I have helped my father haul a good many crops of hay and wheat on the sled with this kind of a rig.

We had what we called log-sleds. They were very low near the hind end of the sled. This sled we used to haul saw logs to the sawmill when there was snow on the ground. We would roll one end of the log on the sled and chain it to the bench of the sled and let the other end drag on the snow. We often put four horses to the sled. In the winter we would in this way haul up great long logs to the house for firewood; then we would have to chop it before and after we got home from school—enough to do day and night. The woodpile stood in the weather; no one thought of a wood-house or of cutting wood except from day to day at the log pile in front of the house.

It was one of the duties of a boy to keep enough wood cut to keep up the fires. Green buckeye logs were the favorite for backlogs,

RECOLLECTIONS

as they would hardly burn at all. Then a big forestick laid on two stones or dogirons and smaller wood between. There are no such fires any more.

As well as I recollect there were no wagons made in this county for some time. My father had a man to make for him the woodwork of a wagon, a crooked-rail bed (they were called Virginia beds); the lock was fastened to the bottom rail of the bed. Father sent to Cincinnati for the iron and steel to iron the wagon. The people who moved here from the southern states had crooked-bed wagons. Families who came here from New Jersey and the eastern states had plank box beds most commonly.

I have already told about all I remember about wagons. I do recollect of seeing one of a different make from any that I have already described. I think there were but few of them made and used in this county. A man living west of my father had the one that I saw. I suppose he made it. The wheels were sawed off of a log from two to three feet through—perhaps a black gum. It is very hard to split. They were turned

RECOLLECTIONS

out for the spindle of the axle to go through. Perhaps the wheels were hooped with iron. He worked oxen to the wagon. It was a four-wheel wagon, and quite a clumsy vehicle.

There were no threshing machines of any kind. I can recollect seeing father thresh his wheat on the ground. Before threshing he would take his hoe and scalp off a spot of earth and pack it with his maul and make it as smooth and level as a brickyard. There he would thresh out his wheat with a flail, what little he had. Then he would get two of his neighbors to help him clean the wheat. At that time there were no fans. Then the two men would use a bed sheet, or a piece of woven flax or tow linen, a man at each end of the sheet; then by a quick revolving motion they would create wind enough to separate the chaff from the wheat. The third man, with a half bushel or basket filled with wheat in the chaff, would stand in front of the two men holding the sheet, pouring it out very slowly, while the other two men by the quick revolving motion of the sheet would raise

RECOLLECTIONS

wind enough to separate the chaff from the grain.

XII

In the early days men had log rollings in the fall and winter, and at all odd times would clear the land. When the timber was green they would chop it down with an ax, pile the brush and cut up the bodies of the trees in proper lengths for rolling. Men who had deadenings would in a dry time, especially in the fall of the year, cut or burn down trees. Those that wouldn't burn up as they lay we would "nigger off" with fire, as we usually term it, in proper lengths to pile in log heaps. I was at log rollings from the time of my first recollection every year until I was grown. At the first log rolling I remember I was not large enough to do anything except to carry the water and whisky that they always had in those days. Sometimes they would appoint two men as captains to divide the ground, then the two captains would divide the men by choosing man about, then they would have a race to see which side could beat. I helped the

RECOLLECTIONS

neighbors roll logs from the time I was large enough until after I became a man grown. I helped ten to fifteen days almost every spring or fall. We helped each other till we got done. We kept no account of time. The big heavy logs, those that were too heavy for men to carry, we would roll together, some six or eight or ten or more; then carry and pile on top as long as you could get them to lie on, making log heaps. When the logs didn't lie up high enough from the ground for the men to get their handspikes under the logs, then they would lay their handspikes on the ground and roll the log on the spikes. Then very often it would take as many men as could stand on each side of the log to lift it and walk with it to the log heap. And occasionally there would be a log too heavy to carry and we would have to lay skids and roll it on the log heap. It took men of nerve and backbone to undergo such heavy work day after day for two or three weeks at a stretch. Yet the most of the people appeared to enjoy it. They were looking ahead for a better time to come in the future.

At the first log rollings I went to, for din-

RECOLLECTIONS

ner they would have boiled ham or roasted meat of some kind, cooked potatoes and turnips, sometimes parsnips, corn pone, biscuit, and sometimes loaf, dried apple pie, or dried pumpkin pie, or dried peach pie, coffee and tea of some kind, milk and butter, and dried venison, whisky and egg-nog. Women of the neighborhood would come in and help to do the cooking and washing dishes, and sometimes, too, have a quilting. The women as well as the men would have a good jolly time. It was the same way at house and barn raisings. The men and women would turn out and help. It appears to me the people in those days at these gatherings enjoyed themselves quite as well as men and women do nowadays at their social parties.

House and barn raising was another heavy and laborious work we had to do. We would chop down the trees, then score and hew the logs, then drag them on what we called a "lizard" through the woods to the place where they wanted to build the house or barn. We would saddle up a horse if we had one, and ride all over the neighborhood asking the neighbors to come on a certain

RECOLLECTIONS

day and help raise the building; and as many as could to bring their wives with them to help do the cooking. Usually they would have a good jolly time. The people would turn out almost to a man to help to put up the building and perhaps roof it on the same day with a clapboard roof.

XIII

Long, long ago, when the country was thinly settled, wild pigeons were very plenty. Some times in the year they were more plenty than at other times. About six miles north from where we lived was a pigeon roost. It was in a large scope of woods. Early in the morning they commenced going south. They would continue flying in large droves for some time. Then again in the evening they flew back north to their place of roosting. They went in such large droves that I may say in the course of the day there would be hundreds of thousands fly over every day where we lived. They hatched and raised their young at their roosting place. I said they flew

RECOLLECTIONS

south. I suppose they flew in every direction from their place of roosting.

Great flocks would settle in the fields after the country was cleared up some, and then the drove would move forward in this way: the hindmost would half jump, half fly to the front, as they fed. Boys often set traps for them. A trap was made of small limbs, or pieces of split boards, bound together hard and fast. It could be carried easily. A trigger was set under one side of the trap and wheat or oats or corn scattered around and under the trap. If a bird, being under, touched the trigger, the trap fell. Sometimes six or more would be caught at once. Quail were trapped in the same way.

In the early times the squirrels for some years became so numerous and destructive to the growing crops that the farmers made hunting matches to see if they could by doing so save their grain from being so badly destroyed. They would set a day to hunt. Every farmer would take his rifle and go on the day set to go hunting (there was a premium given to the man who killed the most squirrels), and every man was to bring

RECOLLECTIONS

in the scalp of every squirrel that he killed. In the evening of the same day they would meet and count and see, and the man who had the largest number of scalps took the premium. In the spring of the year, after we got the corn planted and as soon as it began to come up, the squirrels and wild pigeons would commence taking it up. I, as well as other boys, would have to go around the fields in the mornings with our dogs halloing and yelling, making all the noise we could to scare the squirrels out of the fields, and also in the evening. I had what was called a horse-fiddle. When I put it in motion it would make a noise like a team of horses running away with an empty wagon over a rough, frozen mud road. It was of more value in scaring the squirrels out of the cornfields than anything else.

XIV

The only way we had to cut wheat or oats for a good many years after my first recollection was with a sickle, or reap-hook, as they were sometimes called. The neighbors

RECOLLECTIONS

would help one another cut their wheat. They would notify each other when their wheat would do to cut. Some one of the men would be what they called a leader. He would start in first; when he had cut about four feet the second man would start in, and so on until every man had his place. They aimed for each man to cut the same width. When we could we marked our ground in lands so many feet wide, just enough for two men to cut. By that means each man would know just what was his portion to cut. When they reaped through to the other side of the field they would carry their sickles over their shoulders and bind up the wheat into sheaves as they walked back to where they began, and as a boy I would be there with a bucket of water and a bottle of whisky. They said they must take a little whisky to keep the water from hurting them. Carrying the water and the whisky was the boy's work in harvesting. After a few years' time the scythe and the cradle took the place of the reap-hook, except in down grain, where we always had to use the sickle. I never could do very much in the way of cut-

RECOLLECTIONS

ting wheat with a sickle. But I didn't like to be beaten in cutting wheat with a cradle; I mean in cutting a level stubble and laying the grain nice and straight for the binder to take up, who follows behind. We mowed the meadows with scythes. Frequently the hay lay in swaths until next day. Then we would spread it over the ground and let it lie until it became dry. We would rake it into windrows with hand-rakes, then load it on the sled or wagon and haul it to the barn or stack. Before we had barn room for hay we cocked up the hay out of the windrows and let it stand until the cocks settled. It stacked much better. Before I was large enough to pitch I would take a grape vine and put it round the cock of hay close down to the ground and fasten the two ends together around the cock. Then I would hitch a horse to the vine and drag the cock on the ground to the place where they were stacking it. I could haul it as fast as two men could stack. There was very little wasting, and it saved work and stacked better.

Corn huskings came late in the fall when corn became perfectly dry. Farmers would,

RECOLLECTIONS

many of them at least, pull their corn instead of shucking it on the stalk, haul it to where they wanted it, throw it out on the ground, in a long nice row; they would invite their neighbors and friends to come some evening to the corn shucking, and as many as could to bring their wives to help do the cooking. The men and boys would string all along one side of the pile of corn to shuck, and as they shucked it they would throw the ears over on the other side and put the shucks behind them. While husking they would sing songs and tell long-winded tales and pass the bottle around. One thing I can say, I never knew a man to become intoxicated—I mean drunk—at any gathering that the farmers had to help one another, either log rolling, house or barn raising, harvesting, corn shucking and so forth. When the shucks were put away, then all were invited to the house to eat supper; when supper was over and the dishes washed and put away, at some houses, the bottle would be set out on the table, also a glass of water and a sugar bowl. All were invited to the table, and as many as wished would go and take a

RECOLLECTIONS

drink. Then all the men and women would go to their homes.

XV

I well recollect when it was nothing uncommon to see a company of Indians pass by. There was an Indian village or two in Henry county; also over in Ohio there were Indian towns. In passing back and forth from these towns they passed our house. They also had a camping place near the creek, about one mile west from where we lived. Sometimes they would stay there a day or two. I recollect going with father to where they were in camp and seeing some of their cooking vessels and how they hung up their pots to boil their meat, and also their pack-saddles and ponies whereby they carried their tents and things as they went from place to place. An Indian man and his squaw and boy stayed at our house all night two or three times when passing by. I and the boy would play together as though we belonged to the same tribe. Sometimes there would be three or four Indians stop at father's to get something to eat. I recollect

RECOLLECTIONS

on one occasion some time in the forepart of the day there were four Indian men called at father's to get something to eat. It so happened mother had a fresh warm pone baked, and cold boiled meat, and butter and milk. She set these out on the table and asked them to come up to the table. They ate heartily. When they went out they stopped and pointed up towards heaven, then pointed towards mother and said something in their own language. Mother said it was asking God to bless her for her kindness.

I and the little boy when out playing would go to the sheep house (we had to put our sheep up at night to keep the wolves from killing them) and run our hands through the cracks and catch them by the wool to make them jump. At night when the boy would go to sleep they would wrap him up in a blanket and lay him on the floor under the table. They would wrap themselves in blankets and lie on the floor before the fire.

The Indians were plenty in this part of the country when my grandfather settled in the woods. He and grandmother were old-

RECOLLECTIONS

fashioned Quakers. I used to hear it said that grandmother never turned an Indian away who asked for something to eat, and that during the time of the war with the Indians, in about 1812, they used to tell grandfather not to be afraid, for they would not hurt him or any of his family.

Indians would treat white men very kindly when they would go to where they were camped; if they had their meal about ready they would ask you to stay and eat with them, and when done eating they would light their pipes and ask you to take a smoke with them. They took it as a mark or sign of friendship. If you refused to eat and smoke with them they would regard it as an insult and think you were no friend of theirs and didn't like Indians.

I well recollect meeting four Indian squaws in the road. Each one was on a pony. Indian women, like men, ride astride of the pony's back. Two of the squaws were carrying babies. Each baby, or papoose, as they called them, had a board about its length tied or buckled on its back to hold it straight and fast to the board, then the baby was tied

RECOLLECTIONS

fast to its mother with their backs together; then the mother would jump astride of a pony and away they would go. I don't remember very well how the Indian women dressed. The men wore buckskin pants. They wore an odd garment they called a hunting shirt, caps made of different kinds of skins, and on their feet moccasins made of buck-skin.

XVI

When I was about ten years old my father sold his farm southeast of Williamsburg and bought another farm on Greens Fork, a mile and a half southwest of Williamsburg, and moved on it. Father and mother lived there during the rest of their lifetime. Here father and his boys cleared out a farm of very heavily timbered land and put up buildings; and we gave our attention somewhat to raising hogs. At that time there was, comparatively speaking, little land inclosed. In the summer and fall of the year, usually, all the stock a man had, including his sheep and hogs, were turned outside to the woods. For a good many

RECOLLECTIONS

years the young cattle and sheep seemed to do well. Hogs would do without much feed. And in the fall of the year, when there was plenty of nuts and acorns, hogs would get fat without being fed on corn. Sometimes some would get as wild as deer. I well recollect father had seven head that became very wild. Some time in the forepart of winter, when there was snow on the ground, father got his neighbors to come and bring their dogs to help him catch his hogs. In the morning, when the men all got there, they went out into the woods where the hogs were, taking the dogs with them, and as fast as they could be caught they would knock them in the head and stick them. They finally caught them all. Then they hitched two horses to a rail sled and drove into the woods after them, brought them in, dressed them, cut them up and salted them down for our meat.

For a number of years after the newcomers began to move to Wayne county, everybody had to put a mark on all their stock, except their horses, in order that they could know their own stock from their

RECOLLECTIONS

neighbors', as the most of them had to turn out into the woods for some years. In fact, the farmers marked their stock for a good many years after I began to farm for myself. The mark was in the ear, and usually we had our marks recorded at the county seat. The reason why: if two men had the same mark and should claim the same hog or steer or sheep, and should go to law, if one of the men had failed to have his mark recorded the man who had recorded would be entitled to the animal. Some may wonder how we marked so that no two men would have the same mark that lived in the same neighborhood. As said, they marked altogether in the ear. These are the marks generally used:

A square crop off the point of the right ear is B's mark.

C's mark is a square crop off the left ear.

D's mark is a half crop off the right ear.

E's mark is a half crop off the left ear.

F's mark is a swallow fork in the right ear.

G's mark is a swallow fork in the left ear.

H's mark is a swallow fork in both ears.

RECOLLECTIONS

I's mark is one under bit in right ear.

J's is two under bits in right ear.

K's is one under bit in left ear.

L's is two under bits in left ear.

M's a round hole in right ear.

N's a round hole in left ear.

Horses, as a general thing, were better than the cattle or hogs. A good many of the horses were of pretty good stock and size. The country demanded some large, heavy horses, as bad as the roads were, to do the heavy hauling that had to be done to get the produce to market. Smaller and cheaper quality of horses would do to work on the farm, which were most common to be used for general purposes. The cattle were rather small and rough and some of them heavy-horned. Some of the cows were good for milk and butter, but not for beef. Hogs that we had when I was ten or twelve years old were what we called "sang-diggers," long legs and nose, long bristles, poor feeders. They were small, and weighed 200 to 250, sometimes 300 pounds.

RECOLLECTIONS

XVII

Our early orchards were seedlings. The trees were neither budded nor grafted, but trees that grew from the seed; some of the trees would bear large, good apples. Some trees would have sour apples. There was no telling when you set out an apple tree what kind of an apple it would bear. The early orchards generally were good bearers, but a majority of the fruit was not worth much except for cider and vinegar. The peach trees would grow almost anywhere, and live and bear peaches for a good many years before they would decay and break down. It was no trouble to raise peaches. I recollect when father would send me to the orchard to pick up the peaches by the bushel and feed them to the hogs. That was before he had learned to build dry-kilns or dry-houses to dry fruit in. Father first built a dry-kiln to dry apples and peaches in. He soon built a dry-house; then we could dry fruit by the bushel. We then quit feeding peaches and apples to the hogs.

In early times, when this part of the state

RECOLLECTIONS

was very thinly settled, farmers depended more on raising a crop of corn and feeding it to hogs to make a living than anything else they could do. There was little demand for wheat. New land wouldn't produce wheat very well, not like it would corn. I can recollect when corn sold as low as ten cents a bushel, although it was not usually that low. Wheat, if I recollect correctly, sold for thirty-one and one-fourth cents, and up as high as forty cents per bushel. I do very well recollect when I sold wheat at fifty cents per bushel, and at that day it was considered a very big price. In those early days, if we raised from ten to twelve bushels of wheat to the acre, we thought we were doing well; and sometimes it had the rust. The flour then made was but a very small quantity to the bushel, and poor at that. The mills were old-fashioned and clumsy, and much of the flour went off with the bran and shorts. Sometimes the women would run flour or meal through a fine wire sieve before making bread.

From the time I was twelve to fourteen years old until we had railroads in this coun-

RECOLLECTIONS

try, the people had poor markets. Until we had railroads we had to take our teams and haul to market all of our surplus produce, except our hogs, which we drove on foot. When it came to driving hogs to Cincinnati it was a labor which a great many had to do, although I never did, though I have driven my own, and helped some of my neighbors quite a number of times to drive to Eaton and New Paris, Ohio. After Reid, Beler, Venamon & Smith built a pork and slaughter house at Richmond I sold my hogs to them until they quit packing pork. I now wish to state what a change there has been in the minds of men in regard to raising hogs. Way back as far as the year 1850 the larger the hog the more money he would bring per hundred pounds. Anywhere within ten or twelve miles from Richmond, some of the farmers got up a strife, and I was one of them, who wanted to see who could raise and feed of his own raising a lot of hogs which when well fattened would make the heaviest average per head. In the year 1855, I fattened a lot of my own raising and

RECOLLECTIONS

feeding of sixty-seven head that made an average of 487 pounds, net.

There were a good many farmers in those days that fed hogs of their own raising that would net over 400 pounds. The reason why I speak of the weight of hogs that the farmers raised in those days is to let it be known what a change there has been in the minds not only of the farmers but of the people also. I will speak of one lot more of one man's raising and feeding, then I am done. I went into the state of Ohio on purpose to see them, and to buy a pig. They were a lot of thirty head as pretty white hogs as I ever laid my eyes on; they made an average of 500 pounds net.

XVIII

In an early day, as far back as my memory serves me, up until I was nearly grown, the farmers' wives spun and wove and made clothing for all the family. For summer we wore clothing made of flax or tow linen. Every farmer would sow from one-fourth to an acre in flax. When ripe they would pull it by hand. As they pulled it they would

RECOLLECTIONS

spread it in straight rows or swaths, and let it lie until it was cured and dry, then bind it up in sheaves, being careful to keep it straight, then haul it to the barn and thrash off the seed, then take it to a clean grass lot or meadow and spread it out very thin to let it rot; when the straw becomes tender and brittle they finally bind it up and put it into the barn. In the winter we broke the flax. It took men to do that. Boys could do the swinging the flax. Many a day I had to stay at home from school when a boy to swing flax to get it ready for mother to spin. The women would first have to huckel the flax to get out what was called tow. The tow they would spin and weave into linen, to make our summer pantaloons, and the flax they would spin and weave to make our summer shirts. The women also made a great deal of their summer clothing of flax and cotton yarn. They would buy the raw cotton and take their hand cards and card it into rolls and then spin it, and then dye it any color they wished, and weave it striped or checked as they liked. They also made their winter clothes, as well as ours, of wool. As

RECOLLECTIONS

soon as the sheep were sheared in the spring we would wash the wool. People would frequently ask their neighbor women and girls to come to the wool picking. Then in the evenings the young men would come, too, and all would have what we called in those days a frolic. Then the wool would be sent to the carding machine to be carded into rolls. The women then would spin it into yarn; then color the yarn in any color they should fancy or admire: blue, brown, red, and so on, with walnut bark or madder or indigo. Then they would spool it, warp it, then put it in the loom and through the gears, then through the reeds. The women then can go to weaving it if they have a little spinning wheel to quill the thread and a shuttle to shoot the thread back and forth through the warp on the loom. The wool was generally spun by the girls and younger women. They spun the wool on a big wheel. They would have to walk back and forward on the floor four to six steps to draw out the thread in order to give it the proper amount of twist. The older women could sit by the side of the little wheel and spin flax and tow

RECOLLECTIONS

by the use of the foot upon the treadle to turn the wheel. My dear wife spun the wool, flax, and tow, for many years to make our clothing. I have helped my mother often when I was but a small boy put the warp on the beam of the loom. When the warp was wound up around the beam, we would put the thread of the warp through the gears and reeds of the loom. The warp was called the chain. We would take a pair of winding blades and a spinning wheel, put the skeins on the winding blades, then spool it on little spools about three inches long, then the little spools, or "quills," as we called them, were put on the spindle of the little wheel; then the yarn, which was called "filling," was wound around the quills as full as they would hold; the quills were then ready to be put into the shuttle. Then the weaver would take her seat in the loom and the shuttle in the hand and her feet upon the treadle of the loom and go to weaving cloth. I have filled quills many a day for my mother when she was weaving.

RECOLLECTIONS

XIX

I will here give the kind of farming and agricultural implements we had for some years after I became large enough to commence plowing. We had breaking plows and two kinds of corn plows. We had a two-horse wooden moldboard, bar share plow, to break up the ground for corn, and a one-horse bar share plow of the same make to plow corn; also a single-shovel plow to plow corn, and a one-horse iron-tooth harrow to use in cultivating corn and putting in wheat or corn. Some men would break up their newly-cleared rooty ground with a two-horse big shovel plow. The plow would have an iron colter morticed through the beam of the plow, and the point of the colter fastened at or near the point of the plow to keep the plow from getting fast under the roots. It would run right over the roots and drop into the ground again. It was pretty well calculated to root up the ground where it was very rooty. Land that had just been cleared, while the timber was yet green when first plowed, could not be harrowed on account

RECOLLECTIONS

of so many green roots. In fact, in that day but few farmers had a two-horse harrow. We would cut a big heavy brush and hitch two horses to it and drag it over the plowed ground in the place of a harrow. It answered the purpose of a harrow pretty well. We also put in oats, flax and wheat the same way.

In a few years after the timber had been cut off, when the ground was plowed, the roots would break into pieces so the ground could be harrowed and put in order for planting corn or sowing in wheat. Iron-tooth harrows were not very plenty. A good many farmers had to use wooden-tooth harrows who were not able to buy spike harrows. We cultivated our corn with a one-horse wooden moldboard bar share plow and a single-shovel plow. And some farmers plowed their corn when it was very small with what they called a "bull tongue" not wider than your hand. These were the only kinds of farming implements that we had to tend corn with for a good many years, except the hoe. Some men hoed their corn every time they plowed it. Most of the corn had to have

RECOLLECTIONS

one regular good hoeing before the corn was laid by, and the weeds pulled out of the hill, and then hilled up with the hoe.

For a good many years, while the cultivated land was fresh and very productive, before we began to raise red clover, it became very weedy and well seeded with Spanish needles; more especially the low, black, rich land. A good many farmers, before they went into their fields to gather their corn, would go to the woods and get a brush that would go between the rows of corn without breaking the corn down, then hitch a horse to it and put a boy on the horse and put him to work brushing down the weeds. These are some of the ways of farming in the early settling of Wayne county that I and many other boys had to do.

XX

Before there were any canals or railroads in eastern Indiana most of the surplus produce of Wayne county (and surrounding counties) had to be hauled by wagon and team to Cincinnati or Hamilton, Ohio.

RECOLLECTIONS

Wheat and flour and the country produce that the storekeepers would take in exchange for their dry goods and groceries, such as bacon, lard, eggs, butter, dried fruit, etc., the merchants would market in this way. The farmers had teams to haul the merchant's stuff to and from Cincinnati, and the storekeepers would pay them for hauling in dry goods and groceries, which was a great help to farmers in paying off their own store bills. At that day there were but few men who could within themselves rig out a full team. My father had a large four-horse wagon and two good wheel horses and a near neighbor had two very good horses that worked well in the lead. So between the two they got up a very good four-horse team. The neighbor, Mr. Veal, delighted in being on the road with a team. He was ready when there was any hauling for the merchants. My father was not a good teamster, and I at that time was too young to go on the road with a team. Father made an arrangement with Mr. Veal for me to go along with him and to take care of the team when on the road. For two or

RECOLLECTIONS

three years after father and Mr. Veal rigged up a team I went to and from Cincinnati with Mr. Veal with the team after harvest till cold weather. We took our provisions with us, and most of the time took horse feed, too.

We camped out at night and slept in our wagon. Often there would be from two to four teams fall in together. In those days there were more or less deep mud holes. We frequently would mire down, and then we would have to double team and get some poles or rails and pry up and pull out, and sometimes help pull each other up steep or long muddy hills. We went a few times in the winter. We then put up with men along the road who had prepared for entertainment and had plenty of stable room and feed for horses, and wagon yards. We had our bedding with us and slept on the floor before a fire in order to save expenses. Our beds were two or three quilts. Sometimes two men slept together. The last trip I made with Mr. Veal with our partnership team was in the dead of winter with a six-horse team. Before we got to Cincinnati the

RECOLLECTIONS

weather became warm and rainy, and when there it took all day to unload, and gather up our load to take back with us. It was nearly dark when we got loaded. We then had to go about one mile to where we could stay all night. We had driven but a little way when the off lead-horse became scared at the ringing of the auction bells. He crowded the line horse up against the sidewalk. I had to get down out of the wagon and go and take the horse by the bridle and hold him back in the street so Mr. Veal could keep the team on the street. Wagoners in those days drove their four-, five-, or six-horse teams with a single line. The driver would ride on the near wheel-horse and use the line and whip. I got muddy to my knees wading through the slush and mud by the time we got to the wagon yard where we could stay all night. Next morning it was still warm and rainy and foggy. The roads were not thawed near through. The mud was not deep. The roads were a perfect "loblolly." I don't know any better word to describe it. The four lead horses before night became totally covered with mud. It

RECOLLECTIONS

turned cold in the afternoon and froze up solid. That night we could not untie the horses' tails. Next morning everything was frozen up pretty solid. Our wagons stood about felloe deep in the mud in the evening and were frozen fast in the morning. We had to take mattock and old axes and dig and chop the wagon wheels loose before we could pull out of the wagon yard. Another such day's teaming as we had during that entire day I never experienced before or since. The road we went that day had a good many low places where the water stood and had frozen over. On account of a bridge washing out we had to go on a different road part of the way home. There was no other team ahead of us. We frequently would have to stop and break the ice before we could cross the sloughs and small streams where water had settled down from under the ice. The weather remained severely cold until we got home. This trip to Cincinnati satisfied my ambition for teaming. It took us ten days to make the trip.

RECOLLECTIONS

XXI

The young men of to-day, as soon as they get old enough to go out in company, must have a horse and buggy. To this I do not object. It is all right. When I was but a lad the boys and girls, when they went anywhere, usually went afoot. A good many boys as well as the girls had no horse to ride. When a boy could furnish himself with a horse, saddle and bridle, he felt himself pretty well equipped. I well recollect when the girls as well as the boys frequently had to walk. And sometimes when the nights were light the boys and girls would get together, living two or three miles from church, and foot it there and back home without a murmur. It was the best they could do in those days, and they enjoyed it as well as the young do now. The young people often had parties. The married people would have wood choppings, flax pullings, and apple cuttings and quiltings and ask the young men and women to come in and help them. At night they could have their frolic. I was one of the boys who en-

RECOLLECTIONS

joyed going to those parties and taking an active part in our sport and amusement as well as any one.

XXII

The first meeting that I recollect ever attending was at my Grandfather Lewis'. There were no meeting-houses anywhere near until some time after my first recollection. My Grandfather Lewis had a large hewed-log house. Occasionally there would be preaching at his house. Father lived within a mile. Whenever there was a meeting father and mother would go and take the family with them. There were three men that I heard preach there—Samuel Boyd, a Newlight, Jerry Swofford, a Baptist, and a man by the name of Hockett, also a Baptist. In the course of a few years some Methodists moved into the neighborhood and built a log meeting-house near Williamsburg. In a few years after the Baptists built a meeting-house two or three miles north of Williamsburg and organized.

The Quakers had meeting-houses at Richmond and New Garden; and later in

RECOLLECTIONS

other parts of the county. But they were too far away for me to attend regularly when I was a boy. Besides my mother was not a Quaker, and so we did not belong to the Society of Friends.

The first Quaker meeting that I recollect of going to was at Chester meeting-house, three or four miles north of Richmond. In the early settling of the county of Wayne there were more Quaker churches than any other one denomination. The Quakers were noted for settling down in neighborhoods, and it soon enabled them to erect meeting-houses and form societies. This is one reason why there were more Quaker churches and Quakers, too, perhaps, than any other religious denomination. When at grandfather's my Grandmother Harris would take me up behind her on "Old Rock" Wednesday, the fourth day, and go to Chester and attend meeting. Then as soon as the Friends had assembled the leader, or head man of the church, would say, it is time for meeting, then all would go in and be seated. They would remain on their seats for an hour, and oh, how tired I would be sitting on a slab

RECOLLECTIONS

bench with no back to it, and my feet wouldn't reach the floor! How tired I would get! And all this time not a word would be said; all kept perfectly silent.

XXIII

In early times there were some stores in the country. I never knew but one country store. That was about four miles east of where we lived. The store was owned by a man named John Baldwin. I have heard my mother say she traded there some, and paid as high as twenty-five cents per yard for blue calico. This was when I was not very large. In a few years there was a store at Williamsburg. In those days money was scarce and hard to get. Many farmers had to manage as well they could and sell butter, eggs, feathers, rags and chickens—anything they raised that they had to spare, to get on. They would have their boys out digging ginseng. It brought a good price per pound. The storekeeper would take in exchange for his goods the farmer truck that I have above spoken of. The farmer would buy on time

RECOLLECTIONS

and pay the balance on Christmas or when he sold his hogs. It was the custom of the country with the farmers to pay off their grocery and store bills once a year, and Christmas was considered pay day.

Some of the Quakers, and others, early abolitionists, would not use slave labor goods. There was a free labor store at Newport where many people traded, and at one time Harbor Pierce kept free labor goods at Williamsburg—but not exclusively. Uncle Benjamin Harris and Uncle Allen Lewis for many years thought they used no slave labor goods.

Richmond, when I first saw it, was but a small village, something like our present little country towns. There were two dry-goods stores. A man by the name of Frost kept one, and Brightwell kept the other. I think the stores kept and sold groceries and hardware, etc. There were two or three taverns. A man by the name of Baldwin kept one of them. There was a hatter lived there and made hats for the community. There was no saloon. The men who drank could get their bitters at the taverns. There was

RECOLLECTIONS

no bridge over Whitewater. The large Quaker hewed log yearly meeting-house stood a little north of town. I recollect going with my father to Richmond to hear Elias Hicks preach. He stood in a barn door and preached. There was a large crowd of people to hear him preach. He was a Quaker preacher that made a division in the Society of Friends—called Hicksites. I can not just tell what the difference was.

XXIV

Centerville is one of the oldest towns in the country, and for a number of years was the county seat of Wayne county. When I first saw Centerville it was a small village. There were two or three dry goods stores. A man by the name of Lot Bloomfield, and another by name of Abrahams, had stores. There were two or three doctors living there. One was Dr. Sackett. I don't recollect the names of the others. There were two taverns, a blacksmith shop, two churches, the Methodist Episcopal and Baptist Churches. The court-house was a log building. The

RECOLLECTIONS

county jail was a heavy hewed-log structure. There were two or three lawyers living there whom I knew—Martin Ray, John Newman and James Raideren. There was no mill or machinery of any kind in the town. In a few years there were a good many eminent lawyers living in town. I heard, after I became a man, O. P. Morton make his first Republican speech. It was in the town of Centerville. He formerly had been a Democrat. He was a very brilliant man, a noble statesman. And while he was a lawyer, no man could gain a case before a jury like Morton. He made everybody feel that he was surely right, and his client must have the verdict.

XXV

Washington (now Green's Fork) was one among the older towns in the county of Wayne. When I first saw the town I was ten to twelve years old. There was a grist mill, as they were called those days, a saw mill, a tan yard, a carding machine and fulling mill, where we got our wool carded and our home-made flannel fulled and sheared

RECOLLECTIONS

(some of it) and pressed for our winter and Sunday clothing. There was a blacksmith shop, a shop where they made shoes, a tavern, a gunsmith shop, a dry goods store, and a doctor's office and a schoolhouse. The Quaker meeting-house was a little distance out of the town. It was rather a nice, pleasant place and a little business town, situated in a very good community. Mother often sent me to town, three miles and one-half, on "Old Blaze" with a basket of eggs or butter, and I would get three cents a dozen for eggs and six and one-fourth cents per pound for butter in groceries. Paid twenty-five cents an ounce for indigo for blueing to blue clothes on washday.

The first election I was ever at was at William Johnson's Mill. He laid out the town and named it for himself. The only fight that I ever saw as long as I have lived was at Johnson's Mill on election day. As far as I recollect they had whisky to drink. As I recollect there was but little if any treating till polls were closed and the vote counted. Then the men who were elected had to treat to the whisky, and they would

RECOLLECTIONS

have a jolly good time. My first vote I cast when I was but twenty years old. Samuel Hannah and John Finley were candidates for county clerk. I voted for Sam Hannah. John Finley was elected. I had to attend court in about one week to tell the court whom I voted for. The election was contested. I was called as a witness to tell how I voted. As I stepped away I heard Sam Wilson say, "He is old enough." Wilson knew me very well. The law was, when I cast my first vote, that a voter could vote anywhere in his own county. He was not restricted to his own township where he lived. My first vote was given for Sam Hannah at Washington, Clay township. I then lived in Green township. I was only a little over twenty years old and a warm friend of Sam Hannah. I was very anxious to vote for my candidate. On the day of the election I went to the polls and handed in my vote to the inspector, and as I turned away, and that was pretty quick, I heard some one ask the inspector, "Is he old enough?" Another said, "Oh, yes, I know him." That was true, he knew me, but I presume he did not know my

RECOLLECTIONS

age. I regret now that I voted before I was really entitled to vote.

XXVI

I always went to all the weddings that I was asked to. There was no place or gathering of young people that I liked to go to so well as to a wedding. I was often called on to stand up with the groom. Bridesmaids and bridegrooms were all called waiters. The waiters were expected to be about as well dressed as the groom and bride. When I was a young man the bride and her waiter wore caps on the day of the marriage and also on the day of the infair. The young ladies prided themselves on having very fine and nice made caps to wear at a wedding. Then for some time after she was married whenever the young bride put on her wedding dress or dressed up pretty nice she wore her fine cap, too.

I shall never forget the first Quaker wedding that I was at. I was the young man's waiter. I and the young lady who was the bride's waiter were seated just in front of

RECOLLECTIONS

the pair. When the time came for them to rise to their feet to marry themselves, just before he got up, I was to take his hat off of his head. Before I thought what I had to do he was standing erect on his feet. I was very much embarrassed and so was he. I let him marry himself with his hat on. Before they commenced saying their ceremony in marrying themselves we, the waiters, had to pull their gloves off before they joined their right hands. The bride was not embarrassed. She had the glove started or loosened on her hand so her waiter could pull it off with ease. The groom had on a pair of leather gloves of light tan color which fit neat and tight. As soon as they arose the waiters were to pull the glove off the right hand. We, of course, were ready to perform our part. The bride's waiter took hold at the end of the fingers and off it came. I was still tugging at the glove at the end of his fingers, and I soon saw what I would have to do. I took hold of his wrist with my left hand and grabbed hold of the glove with my right hand, and pulled it off with main strength. Some one present said it came off like a pop-

RECOLLECTIONS

gun. I failed to hear the last of that for a long while.

XXVII

On Thursday, the 19th day of September, 1839, I and Miss Martha Young were married, at the home of her mother, whose first husband was Jesse Young. After his death she married William Boyd who lived on the Walnut level. It was a clear and beautiful day. All the young people who were there had a very pleasant time. This was the ceremony:

“We are hereby assembled for the purpose of uniting this man and this woman in matrimony. If there is any one present that can show any legal cause why they should not be united in matrimony let him now speak; if not, ever after hold your peace. Join your right hands. Branson Lewis Harris, do you agree to take Martha Young, whom you hold by the right hand, to be your lawful and wedded wife in the presence of Almighty God and the witnesses here assembled; promise to love and cherish and to cleave unto her and her alone, to forsake all

RECOLLECTIONS

others until separated by death?" "I do." "Martha Young, do you agree to take Branson Lewis Harris, whom you hold by the right hand, to be your lawful wedded husband, in the presence of Almighty God and the witnesses here assembled, promise to love and cherish and to cleave unto him and him alone, to forsake all others until separated by death?" "I do." "By the authority of the law of the state of Indiana invested in me, I pronounce you husband and wife. Take your seats."

Then we had a nice wedding dinner and a pleasant party full of joy and delight.

Next day, the day of the infair, soon after breakfast, your mother and I and all the young people who were going with us to my father's to the infair, mounted our horses and away we went. When we got within about three-fourths of a mile of father's home two young men on horseback met us, whom he and mother had sent to meet us with a bottle of sweet wine. They called us to a halt. The bottle was passed around; then they escorted us on to my father's. When we got there we got off, tied our horses, and walked through the gate and into the house.

RECOLLECTIONS

There father and mother met us at the door and took my wife and me by the hand and welcomed us to their home, and invited us to come in and to take seats, and had our hats put away. Then all who were present came and took us by the hand and congratulated us over our happy marriage and wished us a long and happy life. We soon were taken out to dinner, where all first partook of the wine, then sat down to a table well loaded with the delicious luxuries of life. When dinner was over and the dishes washed and put away, the young people spent the balance of the day in sport and amusement. Our waiters accompanied us to the close of the infair. My wife and her waiter wore beautiful white dresses and nice caps, ornamenteally trimmed with very fine ribbons. I was dressed in a suit made of fine blue broadcloth; the cut of the coat was what was called close-bodied or "pigeon-tail," trimmed with flowered brass buttons plated with gold, a silk hat, and a pair of fine kid boots.

When we went to housekeeping we had two beds and bedding, two sets of knives and forks, one set of tablespoons, one set of tea-cups and saucers and a pitcher, a few bowls,

RECOLLECTIONS

a pepper box, and a few dishes. We had no cupboard. We had a table and a bureau, and a dash churn and a washboard and a kettle to heat water in, an oven and a skillet, and a stew kettle to hang over the fire to boil our meat and cabbage, potatoes, and roasting ears, and beans. We had an iron tea kettle. We lived in a small low cabin eighteen by twenty feet square, stick and clay chimney, a clapboard roof, poles for joists, and some rough boards laid overhead on the joists. The floor was laid down loose, not nailed. Doors hung on wooden hinges, wooden latch and a six-light glass window. An open curbed well in the yard. We drew water with a well sweep, a bucket hung to the end of a pole.

We lived contented and happy for more than sixty years together. She rests in the Quaker graveyard on our farm. And it will not be long till I shall be called to lie by her side forever.

I have written down these recollections of my boyhood at the solicitation of my sons in order to preserve the customs of the early pioneers in the neighborhood where I was born and have lived for ninety years.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process
Neutralizing Agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date:



PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGIES, L.P.
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 005 407 353 7